

Introduced by

Date

Resolution No. __ – Relative to food marketing and advertising directed to children.

Food marketing and advertising directed to children.

This measure would request specified federal, state, and local officials and entities and private industries to take actions concerning foods and beverages that are advertised and marketed to children.

WHEREAS, The United States is in the midst of a growing epidemic of childhood obesity due to poor diet and physical inactivity, putting growing numbers of American children at increased risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and cancer, along with psychosocial problems including low self-esteem, poor body image, and symptoms of depression; and

WHEREAS, Obesity-associated annual hospital costs for children and youth rose from \$35 million to \$127 million between 1979 and 1999, and national healthcare expenditures due to obesity are \$98 billion per year with half of that cost (\$47 billion) paid through Medicare and Medicaid.

WHEREAS, Healthy eating is vital to preventing heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, and dental caries, and ensuring children’s health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, The food, beverage, and restaurant industries recognize children as a major market force because of their spending power, purchasing influence, and anticipated brand loyalty as adult consumers, with children under 14 years of age purchasing \$30 billion in products and influencing over \$200 billion in family purchases each year; and

WHEREAS, Children are exposed to large amounts of food marketing and advertising, with \$10 billion spent marketing foods and beverages to children in the United States annually; and

WHEREAS, The food, beverage, and restaurant industries utilize multiple strategies to market their products to children, including television advertising, in-

school marketing, the Internet, product placements, toys, books, and clothes with food-brand logos, contests, celebrity and cartoon spokespeople, and child targeted in-store and restaurant promotions; and

WHEREAS, In-school marketing of food and beverages has become increasingly prevalent in recent years and includes: (1) product sales, including sales through vending machines, a la carte, snack bars, soft drink “pouring-rights” agreements through exclusive contracts, branded fast food, and fundraisers; (2) direct advertising, such as food and beverage ads in schools; and (3) indirect advertising, such as corporate-sponsored educational programs, sports team sponsorships, and incentive programs using contests and coupons; and

WHEREAS, The majority of the foods and beverages sold in school vending machines and school stores are calorically dense and low in nutrients, which promotes purchasing and consumption of these foods while children are away from their parents in a captive environment that is supposed to be dedicated to education; and

WHEREAS, Children view an estimated 23,000 commercials each year, about 50 percent of which advertise food products—most often products that are high in calories, fats, sugars, or salt, with almost no references to fruits or vegetables. Children watch an average of one food commercial every five minutes of television viewing time, and as many as three hours of food commercials each week; and

WHEREAS, A recent review by the National Academies’ Institute of Medicine found that television food advertising affects children’s attitudes, preferences, and food purchase requests, and that there is an association between television viewing and childhood obesity; and

WHEREAS, The World Health Organization concluded that the extensive marketing to children of fast food and high calorie, nutrient-poor foods and beverages are a probable causal factor for the accelerating global trend in weight gain and obesity; and,

WHEREAS, Food marketing undermines parental authority and creates a wide gap between what parents tell children is healthful to eat and what companies market as desirable to eat; now therefore, be it

Resolved by the City of Philadelphia, That the City Council of the City of Philadelphia will write a letter and urge the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation to support legislation to have the U.S. Department of Agriculture update its nutrition standards for all foods sold in schools throughout the school day; and be it further

Resolved, That the City Council will write a letter and urge the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation to support legislation to require the Federal Trade Commission to (1) develop and implement nutrition standards for foods and

beverages that are acceptable to advertise or market to children, including foods and beverages that make a positive contribution to children's diets and health by being moderate in portion size, calories, saturated fat, trans fat, refined sugars, and sodium, and provide key nutrients, fruits, vegetables, and whole grain servings and (2) prohibit advertising and marketing of foods and beverages that do not meet those standards through television, magazines, Internet, or other marketing venues for which a significant portion of the audience is children; and be it further

Resolved, That the City Council will write a letter and urge the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation to work to fund media campaigns to promote healthy eating and physical activity, like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's VERB campaign, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, and the National 5 A Day program; and be it further

Resolved, That the City Council calls on food and beverage companies, restaurants, retail stores, advertising agencies, sports and entertainment industries, and print, television, and Web-based media operating in the Philadelphia area to adhere to a voluntary code of practice, developed by experts identified by the State Department of Health Services, that would contain guidelines and standards for responsible food and beverage advertising and marketing aimed at children; and be it further

Resolved, That the City Council encourages the Chief Executive Officer of the School District of Philadelphia and local schools to designate K-12 schools as "junk-food-advertising-free zones," where children and adolescents can pursue learning free of commercial influences and the pressure to consume low nutrient foods and beverages; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the City Council transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the Senate, and each Pennsylvania Senator and member of the House of Representatives.